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AUTHOR MacMillan, Thomas F.
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ABSTRACT

The findings of the California Statewide Longitudinal Study (SLS) of community college students are discussed in terms of their implications for accreditation, evaluation, and educational accountability. First, a background to the study is provided which examines four areas of concern for educational accountability: (1) demographic trends and projections; (2) economic issues of public policy; (3) institutional mission and function; and (4) differentiation of roles among various types of accreditation agencies. Next, selected SLS findings and observations and inferences drawn from them are presented with respect to the following areas: student demographics; academic status and plans; student prototypes; and student outcomes and achievements. Among the observations in this section are that despite changes in the demographics of the community college, there remains a core of traditionally defined younger students who move from high school to college; that the greatest percentage of the SLS sample attended community college in order to transfer to a 4-year college; that the findings tended to explode the myth of the "2-year" college; and that the findings challenge the view that continuing education for part-time, adult students has become the dominant function of the community college. The paper concludes with 10 policy recommendations, several of which focus on the need to utilize and develop the student prototype categories identified in the SLS. (HB)

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THE STATEWIDE LONGITUDINAL STUDY:

IMPLICATIONS FOR

ACCREDITATION, EVALUATION, AND EDUCATIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY

April 15, 1982

Thomas F. MacMillan

Mendocino College

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THE STATEWIDE LONGITUDINAL STUDY:
IMPLICATIONS FOR ACCREDITATION, EVALUATION, AND EDUCATIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY

Background

A number of significant trends and issues have influenced the context of assessment and evaluation of higher education during the last decade. Viewed in retrospect, the 1960s can be seen as halcyon days during which many of the aspirations of visionary community college leadership throughout the nation were seeming to be translated into substantial realities. As a matter of the national interest, a policy commitment of assuring universal access to post-secondary education was being translated into legislative measures expanding educational opportunity through increased financial assistance and supportive services. By the mid-1970s, however, the trend of rapid growth and expansion was coming to an end. In 1976, for the first time since the early 1950s, a national decline occurred in total college enrollments. Even though the counts increased agin in 1977, the break in momentum was sufficient to put higher education on notice that growth patterns were being replaced by "steady state" patterns of attendance. During this same period, pressures for increased accountability were mounting in several public sector areas. For some, accountability questions were raised about the implied promises made to "non-traditional" students, whose records of persistence and performance appeared to be falling short of optimum expectations. For others, issues of accountability tended to focus on the investment of public funds from state or local sources. For still others, the central accountability questions were in the areas of scope and function. By the end of the decade, educational policy leaders were sensing a new

set of attitudes and expectations on the part of the consumer-conscious public, on the part of the legislators, and perhaps particularly on the part of the agencies responsible for educational quality assurance and assessment. Looking forward to the 1980s, many agreed with Kenneth P. Mortimer and Michael L. Tierny that the new "Three Rs" of the coming decade would be: "Reducation, Reallocation, and Retrenchment." (Mortimer and Tierney, 1979)

For most of the 1970s, the California Community Colleges were in some ways insulated from some of the major pressures of accountability. By virtue of being based historically with locally controlled public education, the Community Colleges often experienced strong and consistent advocacy and support in spite of issues of scope and function being discussed in the wider arenas of state and national debate. The Community Colleges, after all, had every reason to be considered successful in the context of supportive state and national policy. As the least expensive point of access for thousands of "non-traditional" students, the Community Colleges provided initially a convincing picture of expanded educational opportunity. As an honest broker of a variety of Community Service and Adult Education activities, the Community Colleges were perceived as providing a visible and immediate return on the investment of local tax revenues. But the combined impact of heightened consumerism, increasing diversity in the educational marketplace, and a general mood of tax revolt brought an end to complacency. At the passage of Proposition 13, the popular Tax Reform Measure which altered dramatically the ability of local public agencies to generate property tax revenues according to previous formulas, the Community Colleges discovered that they were not as insulated from accountability and assessment demands as many had thought.

The present social and political context, within which the data of the Statewide Longitudinal Study must be interpreted, is one that calls for increased educational accountability in light of four major areas of concern: 1) Demographic trends and projections; 2) Economic issues of Public Policy; 3) Institutional Mission and Function, and; 4) Differentiation of Roles among Quality Assessment/ Assurance Agencies. Each of these areas will be presented briefly below to complete the background view within which the Statewide Longitudinal Study Data can be brought into sharper focus.

Demographic Trends and Projections

The national projections of the college student population have for some time indicated a slump in "traditional" enrollment age pools (18 to 21 or 18 to 24, depending upon the source of data). Cartter (1976) estimated that the number of eighteen year olds would decline by 19 percent during the 1980's. Between 1990 and 2000, the potential college-age pool will have declines by 6 to 15 percent, and by 5 to 12 percent by the year 2000. Henderson and Plummer (1978) have noted that, in addition to the absolute numerical decline in college-age youth (18 - 24), the composition of the pool is also changing to include a greater proportion of Black and Hispanic youth. In addition, the NCES data indicate that a greater proportion of women than of men are electing to attend college, and greater proportions of both sexes are delaying college entrance. Finally, the trend is toward increased numbers and proportions of part-time enrollments.

In California, the shifting participation patterns are evident among the Community Colleges. Between 1975 and 1979, for example, the enrollment trends followed a pattern indicated in Table 1 below. As shown, the five year period

included discontinuities in the pattern of continuous growth, coupled with a consistent gain in the proportion of part-time students.

Table 1

CCCs: Five Year Enrollment Pattern*
(1975 - 1979)

Year	Full-time		Part-time		Total
	N	%	N	%	
1975	374,473	34	727,075	66	1,096,548
1976	328,107	31	744,997	69	1,073,104
1977	321,524	29	798,996	71	1,120,520
1978	285,133	27	762,034	73	1,047,167
1979	286,017	26	814,203	74	1,100,220

*Source: CPEC Information Digest-1980, p.40

Data for the 1979-80 academic year indicate about one half of the enrollment of the California Community Colleges (Credit Classes) was accounted for by persons in the 18 - 24 age bracket. The median age for that year was in the mid-twenties. A more comprehensive picture of the age distribution of credit students in California Community Colleges, 1979, is shown in Table 2 below. While the younger age groups still tend to predominate, as expected, it is noteworthy that as of 1979 over a third of the credit enrollment of the CCCs was in age groups of 30 and above.

Table 2

California Community Colleges, Fall, 1979*
Enrollment by Age

Age Group	Number	Percentage
19 and Under	229, 249	23%
20 - 29	433, 923	43%
30 - 39	175, 946	17%
40 - 49	87,351	9%
50 - 59	49, 068	5%
60 and Over	31, 834	3%

*Source: CCCs Student Profile, Fall 1979, pp. 19-20.

A changing demographic pattern of enrollment has implications for educational assessment in two areas. First, it reflects in the measurement of educational activities (credit hours, units of average daily attendance, weekly student contact hours, etc.). Secondly, it reflects in the measurement of educational outcomes (number of semesters completed, persistence toward a degree or certificate, transfer, employment, etc.). In essense, changing demographics reflect changing patterns of consumer expectation, participation, and achievement. Insofar as Community Colleges are evaluated in terms of criteria reflecting patterns and expectations of the 1950s and 1960s, they may be seen as comparatively less effective by some observers. The demographic context, however, may be useful to indicate that the institutions are being changed internally due to shifting expectations and participation patterns by members of the communities in which they are located.

Economic Trends and Projections

Financing higher education has become a significant issue as part of a larger pattern of taxpayer concern over the increased burdens of public investment in the national interest. On the national scale, a recent study by the Brookings Institution (Breneman and Nelson, 1981) indicated that the taxpayer revolt of the 1970s could be better understood in light of historical data on governmental expenditures as a percentage of Gross National Product (GNP). A portion of the data are presented below as Table 3.

Table 3

Government Expenditure as a Percentage of Gross National Product (GNP) Selected Years: 1929 - 1980 * (in billions of dollars)

Year	Federal		State		Local		Total		GNP
	$	%	$	%	$	%	$	%	
1929	2.6	2.5	2.1	2.0	5.5	5.3	10.2	9.9	103.4
1939	8.9	9.8	3.7	4.1	4.8	5.3	17.4	19.2	90.8
1949	41.3	16.0	8.9	3.4	9.1	3.5	59.3	23.0	258.0
1959	91.0	18.7	18.7	3.8	21.3	4.4	131.0	26.9	486.5
1969	188.4	20.1	49.6	5.3	47.6	5.1	285.6	30.5	935.5
1979	509.2	21.1	136.1	5.6	107.9	4.5	753.2	31.2	2,413.9
1980	601.6	22.9	150.2	5.7	116.7	4.4	868.5	33.1	2,626.1

*Source: Financing Community Colleges: An Economic Perspective (The Brookings Institution, 1981, p.198)

The data indicate a part of the pattern of increased governmental claim against the total Gross National Product. In fact, the pattern peaked in 1975, when 34.9% of the GNP was accounted for by government expenditures. In Economics, there is a principle developed by Baumol which suggests that, whenever a subsystem within a economy is growing at a more rapid rate of increase than the total system, it is possible to predict a point at which the subsystem will

claim all of the resources of the total system. In simple terms, the rate of increase of governmental expenditures as a percentage of GNP could not go on indefinitely without eventually requiring the entire GNP to support the governmental sector. While, practically speaking, such a development would never occur, it was the prospect of such an event which underlay the Tax Revolt of the late 1970's. California's Proposition 13 was but one indication of a popular revolt against the upward spiral of taxation. As the figures of Table 3 indicate, the movement seems to have had a demonstrable impact at the leve' on which the greatest pressure was brought to bear: the local property tax. In terms of percentages, between 1969 and 1980, Local Governmental Expenditures (principally supported through the local property tax) fell from 5.1% to 4.4%, a level lower than at any time since 1949.

During the same period of time (1969 - 1980), State and Federal Expenditures increased. With this increase, insofar as it reflected a shift of responsibility away from the local taxing entity, came increased State and Federal investment in the educational enterprise. For the California Community Colleges, the major shift in Income Sources occurred following Proposition 13, in 1978. Between 1975 and 1979, the shift in Income Sources is shown in Table 4 below.

Table 4

CCCs: Sources of Income; 1975 - 1979*
(In Percentages)

Year	Local	State	Federal	Other	Total ($)
1975	47.0	43.2	7.8	2.0	1,137,832,335
1976	48.2	42.5	7.6	1.7	1,259,353,991
1977	50.3	40.9	7.2	1.6	1,428,623,451
1978	27.7	63.1	6.8	2.4	1,348,575,980
1979	23.0	68.9	6.7	1.4	1,497,156,748

*Sources: CPEC Information Digest, 1980
CCCs Fiscal Data Abstract 1979 - 80

As increased participation by the State in the fiscal support of the California Commuunity Colleges emerges, it is also the case that increased monitoring for program and fiscal compliance requirements follows. As the Brookings Institution points out, "the states will become more active in shaping the system of higher education in the 1980's, operating through strengthened coordinating boards and ad hoc legislative or gubernatorial commissions." Breneman and Nelson, 1981; p. 199). In California, both the California Postsecondary Education Commission (CPEC) and the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges (BGCCC) have increased the monitoring, regulatory enforcement, and compliance functions substantially over the period of 1975 to the present.

The increased participation by the State in funding for Community Colleges, coupled with the economic realities of a steady-state economic condition and increasing evidence of taxpayer resistance to additional tax burdens, suggests that considerations of efficiency and equity may become central themes of the educational assessment enterprise of the 1980s. As the financial pinch begins to create bruises upon the flesh of local districts, it is increasingly likely that fiscal considerations will determine the kinds and qualities of programs and services to be offered. Already, the first wave of rssponse to fiscal crisis is evident in the dismantling of programs or services formerly considered essential, or at least highly desirable. The impact has been particularly strong in those areas which produce no WSCH foundation for apportionment - admissions and records, recruitment, student personnel services, and supportive operations and maintenance areas. In such a context, the purposes of educational assessment are likely to become mixed, as much directed toward the justification of a Reduction in Force as to an evaluation of program activity, outcome, or quality.

Institutional Mission and Function

California has held a position of esteem for the definition and differentiation of roles and functions for public Higher Education reflected in the 1960 Master Plan. During the 1970s, a series of studies and recommendations were made which:

- Essentially reaffirmed the missions and functions of each of the three public segments of Higher Education in California
- Expanded and redefined the roles and responsibilities of the Coordinating Council for Higher Education, and extended the authority of the new Commission (CPEC) to the development of criteria for program planning and maintenance "where substantial expense or critical cost/benefit ratios are involved." (Select Committee on the Master Plan, 1972)
- Expanded and redefined the role and responsibility of the Coordinating Council for Higher Education in the monitoring of legislative intent "that each resident of California who has the capacity and motivation to benefit from higher education should have an opportunity to enroll in an institution of higher education." (Access)
- Expanded and redefined the role and responsibilty of the Coordinating Council for Higher Education in the area of delineation of functions for adult and continuing education.

Beginning in 1975, the California Postsecondary Education Commission (CPEC) annually developed or updated a series of five-year plans for California's Higher Education. Intrinsic to the development of each of the plans and updates was a set of continuing assumptions about the missions and functions of each of the segments of Higher Education. At the same time, the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges (BGCCC), and the California

Community and Junior College Association (CCJCA) began to develop statements of mission and function reflecting both traditionally defined roles of the Community Colleges, and modification or expansion of roles which had become, de facto, an important set of dimensions of the two-year college movement. In January, 1976, the BGCCC adopted a ten (10) point set of Statewide Goals for California Community Colleges including:

- Equal opportunity for access to quality community college education for all eligible individuals in California irrespective of age, sex, race, or ancestry; economic, cultural, or physical condition; previous educational experience; or geographic location.
- Preservation of academic freedom to maintain the integrity of instruction by thorough exploration of all ideas related to the topic under discussion.
- Fostering of staff excellence.
- Effective use of human and physical resources.
- Extensive use of community resources to augment the traditional campus or college center, expanding off-campus outreach instructional facilities to meet the varying needs, interests and capacities of individuals.
- Effective and equitable distribution of state funds among districts.
- Responsible evaluation through accreditation, self-appraisal, and other appropriate and locally determined measures of accountability.
- Policies that will encourage innovative and creative developments, based on anticipation of the future, in the provision of colleges services and use of community resources.
- Effective cooperation and planning among all educational institutions and other organizations to secure accessible education for all in an efficient manner.
- Timely consultation with all concerned segments of CCCs so that the plans and the needs of the colleges are accurately identified and articulated to state and federal-level agencies, and so that state policies are effectively communicated to local districts and colleges.

Both the BGCCC, as the official State agency charged with oversight of the California Community Colleges, and the voluntary professional organization CCJCA reaffirmed in their respective Mission statements the traditional roles and responsibilities of the local colleges. Collectively, these roles include Career/Vocational Education, Transfer Education, Community Services, Student Support and Guidance Services, and Adult Education (non-credit) responsive to local community needs.

In a series of reports based on a sample of CCC students initially drawn in 1972, Dr. Dorothy Knoell of CPEC reported in 1976 that "continuing education for part-time, adult students has become the dominant function of the Community Colleges, with no resultant neglect of the occupational, transfer, and general education functions for more traditional students." (Knoell, 1976, p. i) In May, 1981, however, Dr. Knoell observed that the earlier conclusion had perhaps been premature, and that questions should be raised "whether these traditional missions of offering transfer programs, occupational preparation and general education are suffering in comparison with continuing education." (Knoell, 1981, p.1) Documenting the changes in student population suggested earlier in this paper, Knoell warned that a very real current issue for CCCs is how to "offer instruction for credit to students with reading and writing skills ranging from sixth grade through a level required for study at the graduate level, and with objectives ranging from 'transfer to the University' to 'personal interest, with no credit desired.'" (Knoell, 1981, p. 16) The impact of the CPEC paper was to stimulate an active professional discussion concerning the boundaries and limitations of the Community College Mission so recently evolved out of the era of expansion and abundance.

Perhaps predictably, the CPEC paper received strong and immediate negative reaction from within Community College ranks. In a lead article in the professional association of California Community College administrators, Dr. Jack Bessire labelled the distribution of the paper "a disservice to community colleges," and urged the professional community to "refuse to accept the paper as an appropriate basis for discussing mission and function or issues." (Bessire, 1981) Throughout both the CPEC paper and the ACCCA response, a major focus was placed upon the impact of the changing student population upon preferences for courses, programs, and subsequent activities (such as entering a occupation or transferring to a UC or CSUC campus). While both authors recognize that the rapidly changing constituency of consumers enrolled in California Community Colleges has had an impact on institutional mission, their opinions are entirely divergent on the issue of the future. While Knoell concludes:

> "If choices and priorities are not made, the result will probably be to do everything less well and some things unsatisfactorily." (Knoell, 1981, p. 14),

Bessire responds:

> "The community colleges have established their reputation as responsive organizations providing quality programs and services. Declining resources obviously place a limit on a college's ability to be all things to all people. Yet, there is no reason to believe that the current function and mission of the colleges cannot continue." (Bessire, 1981, p.3)

For better or worse, issues of redefinition of the Mission and Function of the California Community Colleges, as reflected through patterns of student enrollment, persistence, and subsequent behavior, have become sharply articulated during the past two (2) years.

Differentiation of Roles among Quality Assessment/Assurance Agencies

A number of agencies currently contend in the field of Educational Assessment. Historically, the most widely accepted indication of institutional quality assurance was through the regional accreditation process. Since 1952, the California Community Colleges affiliated with the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC), a voluntary, professional, regional accreditation agency. The regional accreditation process, currently administered through the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (WASC), has undergone extensive revision and updating since its inception. In the 1970s, a complete revision of the Commission's Handbook, under the leadership of Dr. James Thornton, resulted in an accrediting process which emphasized the uniquesness of each institution, the diversity of communities, and the autonomy of local Boards of Trustees to set educational policy. At the same time, the revised Handbook also placed increased emphasis upon the needs of emerging student sub-populations and the diversity of institutional response to such needs. Regional accreditation is, and has always been, intended to be a supportive professional process through which an institution is given the opportunity for extensive self-evaluation, honest asssessment of internal strengths and weaknesses, and peer review by a team of experienced and knowledgeable professionals. The accreditation process continues to be modified to meet changing conditions, and substantive changes continue to be made in the content of the Commission's Handbook, most recently revised in 1981.

Voluntary regional accreditation has become a repeated target of criticism during the last decade. A recent Task Force of the Education Commission of the States claimed that the contest between regulatory agencies of the states and voluntary accreditation agencies is certain to become more intense. Education, it was observed, may become more bureaucratic, but not necessarily

more excellent, more effective, or more efficient.

While the debate may rage over which agencies are likeliest truly to represent the public interest in matters of Educational Assessment, there is no doubt that increased regulation and control has been assigned to the state as the demands of efficiency and effectiveness have followed an increased investment of state tax revenues. In a recent paper on Compliance, General Counsel Tom Nussbaum of the California Community Colleges noted that, of approximately 3500 provisions of the Education Code pertaining directly to Community Colleges, approximately 600 of these "assign responsibility to the Board of Governors or the Chancellor's Office." (Nussbaum, 1982) Honestly portraying the present state of affairs, Nussbaum observes:

> Districts, of course, have been the principal victims of this administrative tendency /to separately implement and administer its various functions/. They have had to bear the brunt of at least 15 different compliance procedures, duplicate reporting requirements, and not knowing what is clearly expected of them. At the same time, given the significant increase in the proportion of state funding, there has been increased legislative (along with CPEC, the Legislative Analyst and the Department of Finance) interest in the extent to which community colleges are meeting their statutory responsibilities. (Nussbaum, 1982, p.1)

In the balance of his paper, Nussbaum outlines progress made in recent years to clarify the boundaries and limits of mandated responsibilities assigned to BGCCC, and suggests that in the future a sharper distinction between the "comprehensive compliance process" and the "comprehensive planning process" may serve both the state and the local district more effectively.

At the present time, a joint project submitted by the Chancellor's Office of the California Community Colleges and the Accrediting Commission, and funded by the Fund for Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE) is in its initial phases. The objectives of the project are outlined in seven (7) distinct project activities: designation of appropriate roles of state agencies and accreditating associations; design and implementation of a planning and evaluation component to be added to the Chancellor's Office Information System; conduct of workshops to train local districts in the use and implementation of the planning and evaluation component; development of a plan for coordinated visits between the Chancellor's staff and the accrediting commission to local colleges; assessment of applicability of the model to Hawaii, as the other state in the accrediting region; dissemination of project results through state and national channels, and; evaluation of the impact and effectiveness of the project. The FIPSE project represents an important cooperative venture between the state agency mandated to assure compliance with the multiplicity of laws and regulations within which the Community Colleges must operate, and the voluntary professional agency traditionally charged with broader questions of Educational Quality Assurance.

Community Colleges have, as a result of both upgraded voluntary accreditation procedures and the more regulatory compliance demands evolving because of increased statewide responsibility and authority by CPEC and BGCCC, developed greater local capabilities for gathering and interpreting management information. The colleges have also responded to pressures for

quality assurance in areas of the curriculum dealing with specific vocational and/or technical competencies. Extensive cooperation and coordination of visits occurs with accrediting agencies addressing Allied Health Occupations, for example. On a voluntary level, Project CCOPES, coordinated through the California Community Colleges, assisted in the self-study and evaluation of over 1,450 Occupational Education Programs in the CCC during 1978 - 1980. As a matter of relevance to the present paper, it it noteworthy that the first listed area in need of improvement, according to the CCOPES summary data was the need for "Coordination of student placement and student follow-up, and use of student follow-up information." (CCOPES, 1981, p.1)

To the question, "Which agency shall represent the public interest in matters of Educational Quality Assurance?", the current answer appears to be: both public and voluntary, both state and local, both regional and specialized, both compliance and planning. The issue, in other words, is far from settled, but is being better defined, and roles and responsibilities better differentiated.

THE STATEWIDE LONGITUDINAL STUDY: SELECTED FINDINGS

The Statewide Longitudinal Study (SLS) is an extensive consortium effort involving fifteen (15) California Community Colleges of sufficient demographic diversity to represent the State. Commencing with the Fall, 1978, semester, the SLS staff collected a sample intended to be within a 4 percent confidence interval of representing all newly admitted students in each participating college. Since 1978, the SLS has produced a series of four (4) major reports, with a fifth currently in preparation.

The SLS stated two (2) major goals that bear directly upon issues suggested in the Background section of this paper. These goals were:

- To provide detailed information about pertinent aspects of the student bodies of the California Community Colleges.
- To provide information about the effects of college programs on the lives of students.

Particular attention was given to special student subpopulations, such as vocational students, Limited English Speaking/Non English Speaking (LES/NES), disadvantaged, handicapped, displaced homemakers, and students in majors not traditional for their sex.

The Study was designed to provide two (2) separate kinds of data relevant to questions of Educational Assessment. First, measures of Activity were included: participation patterns by age, racial/ethnic background; number of units enrolled, completed over time; actual participation in specified curriculum patterns; stated preferences and expectations. Taken collectively, these data provide a basis for assessing the broad questions of relationship between institutional mission and institutional clientele.

Secondly, measures of Outcome were included: occupational placement, completion of stated objective, award of degree and/or certificate, transfer to another postsecondary education institution. In the aggregate, these data provide a basis for assessing institional effectiveness, insofar as such effectiveness can be determined by student behavior and expressed evaluative opinion. The study neither claimed nor reported findings related to larger evaluation issues such as efficiency and/or equity. No data were included pertaining to costs per unit of activity, or per unit of achievement. No data were included concerning long term impacts of decisions to enter the job market instead of transferring, irrespective of eligibility, and without reference to earlier stated intention.

Below are presented selected findings from the four (4) published reports of the SLS, along with additional data made available from the forthcoming, most recent data analysis. For each finding, a brief comment will be included relating the finding to one of the issues or areas of concern indicated as part of the background of this paper.

Demographic Findings:

- Overall, 44 percent of the sample were male, 56 percent female. (SLS 1, p. 32)
- Though the mean age in the total sample is 25.8 years, the modal age is 18.0 years, and the median age is 21.6 years. Fully 77 percent of the sample was younger than 30 years of age, and 45 percent of the sample was younger than 20 years of age, indicating that the bulk of the community college population is composed of young people. (SLS 1, p. 33)
- Ethnicity of the population was distributed as follows: 6.2% Asian/ Pacific Islander; 8.0% Black; 12.6% Hispanic; 68.7% White, not Hispanic; Other (including N.R.) 4.5%.

Observations/ Inferences

The Demographics of the Sample population are consistent with data from other studies roughly contemporary to the SLS (i.e., Through the Open Door). Throughout the 1970s, as noted earlier, a gradual shift in student population seemed to occur, with a greater proportion of female students attending, a greater proportion of Racial/Ethnic minority representation appearing, and a greater proportion of older students. At the same time, the SLS data indicate that among first enrollment students, fully 45% were in the age group under 20 years of age. This compares with figures presented above (p. 5) for 1979, which indicated that students under 20 accounted for 23% of the total CCC population (1979). The variation between the SLS sample and the total CCC enrollment data may partially be explained by the fact that younger students tend to move through the Community College and on to other objectives once have completed their courses or programs. Older students, especially in areas of stable population, tend to be longer and more continuous or repeated users of the services of the CCCs. The SLS data help to emphasize that, despite overall changes in the demographics of the CCCs, there remains a "core" of traditionally defined, younger students who move from the high school into the Community College. Although this

"Core" is more diverse racially and ethnically than in the past, it is still the foundation of expectation for programs in the Occupational and Transfer curricula; it is the likeliest to continue sequentially until an objective is met.

Academic Status and Plans: Findings

- Overall, 49 percent of all students in the sample on whom data were available were day students (all classes beginning earlier than 4:30 p.m.); 37 percent were in evening classes only; 14 percent had both day and evening classes. (SLS 1, p. 47)

- The modal number of courses signed up for was one (27 percent); the next highest was two (17 percent), followed by three, four and five, signed up for by between 12 percent and 13 percent, with little difference between them. (SLS 1, p. 48)

- The modal number of units signed up for was three (24 percent); the next highest was twelve (20 percent). Students taking six to eleven units accounted for 27 percent of the Sample, and students taking between fifteen and sixteen units accounted for 13 percent of the sample. (SLS 1, p. 58)

- Among students assigned by a SAM Vocational Code as enrolled in a Vocational program: 42% indicated as of Fall, 1978, that they were enrolled for Pre-Employment Training; 30% for Preparation to Transfer; 14% for Inservice Training; 3% for Retrining; 19% for Self-enrichment; and 8% Undecided. (SLS II, p.17)

- Among students assigned to a Nonvocational status by SAM Code in the Fall, 1978 semester: 20% indicated their purpose to be Pre-Employment Training; 43% preparation for Transfer; 6% Inservice Training; 2% Retraining; 31% Self-enrichment, and 9% Undecided. (SLS II, p.17)

- Among Day students, 33% indicated their purpose to be Pre-Employment Training; 44% Transfer Preparation; 3% Inservice Education; 2% Retraining, and 19% Self-Enrichment. (SLS II, p. 46)

- Among Evening Students, 22% indicated Pre-Employment Training; 16% Transfer Preparation; 16% Inservice; 3 Retraining; 43% Self-Enrichment.

- For all Sample students, the greatest percentage (33.6%) indicated a Transfer Preparation intent; 28.7% reported enrolling for Pre-Employment Training; 27.5% for Self-Enrichment. The remaining 10.2% reported Inservice or Retraining as reasons for attending.

Observations/ Inferences

The SLS sample, insofar as it represents the consumer preferences of the California Community Colleges, provides evidence affirming quite traditional aspects of the Mission and Function of the institutions. In the aggregate, the responding sample indicated first preference for Transfer Preparation. Divided according to Day or Evening or Vocational/Nonvocational categories, the preferences tended to emphasize the Pre-Employment Training Mission of Occupational Education. Approximately 30% indicated "Self-Enrichment" as a reason for attendance.

In the discussion of the relationship between student preferences and Mission, some authors have suggested a tension between the "Self-Enrichment" goals of a substantial proportion of credit students and the curriculum goals of the Transfer and/or Vocational Education programs of the colleges. It may be suggested that no necessary contradiction exists between the stated goals of the "Self-Enrichment" students and those of the various curricula within the Transfer or Vocational majors. Findings reported in SLS I and II suggest that a sizable portion of students expressed a plan for "Occasional" enrollment to be undertaken intermittently over a period of years in the local college. If it may be assumed that Self-Enrichment goals are more transient

than the longer range goals of Transfer and/or Vocational Preparation, then it might follow that the Self-Enrichment "pool" of enrollment is differentiated from the other students in the sample by tending to focus on "course" rather than "program" objectives. Insofar as their goals may be achieved through persistence and academic performance comparable to the other students in the sample, the Self-Enrichment students may serve the useful function of creating a sufficient demand pool to make the offering of selected curricula, programs, and/or courses feasible which might otherwise be curtailed based only on the needs of "traditional" students.

The SLS data seem to provide no evidence of tension of Mission and Function based on the expressed preferences of students for various goals. This inference, however, is tempered by the fact that students may have had additional reasons for attending that might not have been reflected in the interview response items. Secondly, it must be noted that student intention tends to change over time, and that the initial observation of the students' intent, whether by response to an interview or by transcript analysis, is probably an unstable indication of long-term commitment.

While one (1) out of every two (2) students (49%) was reportedly a Day student exclusively, only one (1) out of three (3) (33%) students was enrolled for 12 or more units upon initial survey. The 1979 CPEC data reported earlier in this paper (p.4) indicated that, as of Fall, 1978, 73% of all CCC students were part-time. The discrepancy between the percentages may be explained by the fact the SLS considered only those students new to the particular campus, rather than total enrollment. On balance, however, the discrepancy (approximately 6% greater percentage of part-timers when the total enrollment is considered) is not as great as might be expected, given the greater probability of completion, transfer, and/or attrition among the younger, full-time students in the SLS sample.

Student Prototypes: Findings

One of the objectives of SLS was to identify and trace students with divergent goals, backgrounds, and patterns of enrollment as a foundation for inferring a set of relationships between what came to be called "Student Prototypes" and College Mission or Function. The first attempt to define Prototypes was reported in SLS II on the basis of Spring, 1979 data. In all, fifteen (15) Prototypes were labelled and operationally defined. By Spring, 1980, the original set of Prototypes had been refined under three (3) major headings, with a total of eighteen (18) different subgroups distinguished as follows:

TRANSFER FUNCTION PROTOTYPES

- Full-Time Transfer
- Part-time Transfer
- Undisiciplined Transfer
- Technical Transfer
- Intercollegiate Athletes
- Financial Aid Seeking Students
- Expediter Students

VOCATIONAL FUNCTION STUDENT PROTOTYPES

- (Technical Transfer)
- Career Program Completers
- Job Seekers
- Job Upgraders
- Second Career Students
- License Maintainers

SPECIAL INTEREST FUNCTION PROTOTYPES

Leisure Skills Students

Education Seekers

Art and Culture Students

Explorer/Experimenter Students

Basic Skills Students

Lateral Transfer Students

The descriptive case suggested by the Prototypes is that Community Colleges indeed serve distinctive populations, that there is a strong relationship between the student population and the elected curriculum pattern, and that institutional Mission and Function is largely determined by the "mix" of Prototypes.

An extensive validation procedure was developed to assess the "fit" between types of course enrollments (from actual records) and inferred Prototypes. Research Coordinators on each campus were requested to make tentative assignments of students to Prototypes, and to indicate a level of confidence in the assignment, based upon a three (3) point scale of certainty. Finally, interviewed students in the 1980 - 1981 follow-up contacts were read descriptions of the Prototypes to which they had been assigned: 88 percent agreed that the suggested Prototype was accurate. An additional 5 percent agreed that the Prototype had been accurate at the time assigned, but that subsequent decisions had changed the student's direction. Approximately 7 percent stated that the Prototype was assigned in error. (SLS IV, pp. 3-8, 3-9) The detailed descriptions and definitions of the Prototypes given in SLS IV should be consulted for fuller understanding of the distinctions made within the three (3) broad categories of the Prototypes.

The most extensive analysis of data for the various Prototypes is presented in SLS V (Spring, 1982), currently in final draft. Data made available to the SLS Data Review Project are presented below in a series of Tables.

Table 5

SLS Total Sample: Function by Enrollments*

	Transfer	Vocational	Special Interest	Total
	%	%	%	%
1st Term Only	13.0	33.4	49.4	30.2
First Term Plus Return	10.6	10.6	11.9	10.0
1st and 2nd Term Only	16.1	17.3	15.5	16.3
1st and 2nd Plus Return	4.4	4.7	4.5	4.5
1st, 2nd, and 3rd Term Only	9.2	9.0	6.4	8.3
1st, 2nd, and 3rd Term Plus Return	3.7	2.4	2.0	2.8
First 4 Consecutive Terms	14.8	8.1	4.4	9.6
First 4 Plus Return	2.2	1.3	0.5	1.4
Five Consecutive Terms	8.3	5.0	2.1	5.5
Six Consecutive Terms	17.7	8.5	3.2	10.5

Source: SLS V (in press, 1982, Table 3 - 11)

Table 6

SLS Total Sample: Function by S.A.M.*
(Highest SAM Class)

	Transfer %	Vocational %	Special Interest %	Total %
Specific Occupational Major	28.7	55.4	17.3	35.0
Broad Occupational Major	19.5	20.1	14.2	18.3
Occupational Area Not Determined	16.3	12.6	19.4	15.9
Non-Occupational Major	35.0	11.7	49.1	30.3

Source: SLS V (In press, Table 3 -14)

Table 7

SLS Total Sample: Function by SAM Major
(As of Fall, 1978)

	Transfer %	Vocational %	Special Interest %	Total %
Agriculture and Natural Resources	2.1	2.0	1.9	2.0
Architecture and Env. Design	1.4	1.0	0.5	1.0
Business and Management	20.5	33.1	16.7	24.1
Computer & Information Science	3.6	4.5	1.3	3.3
Education	2.3	1.6	2.0	1.9
Engineering and Related	5.7	16.3	8.6	10.4
Fine and Applied Arts	3.5	2.2	4.8	3.4
Health Occupations	2.5	8.0	1.7	4.3
Home Economics	1.8	1.9	2.3	2.0
Public Affairs and Services	2.4	4.7	1.9	3.1
Commercial Svcs	0.1	3.0	0.4	1.3
Apprenticeship	0.6	3.1	1.1	1.6
General Transfer	45.0	12.3	15.4	23.9
Personal Interest	8.3	6.3	41.3	16.6

Observations/ Inferences

Considerable attention has been given to the "explosion of the myth of the two-year college." The SLS data shown in Tables 5 through 7 above tend to provide further evidence that the myth is indeed exploded. As many CCC leaders have noted, the explosion hardly rattled any dishes in the neighborhoods of higher education. Indeed, there is as much evidence to "explode" the myth of a four-year college as to "demythologize" the CCCs. The evidence confirms that a greater number of students are choosing to enroll for longer periods of time, to delay their enrollments, to choose planned dis - continuities in enrollment for other pursuits, and to vary between Full and Part-time status over time while working toward an anticipated goal.

Table 5 indicates that 43% of the Transfer Prototypes remained in a pattern of enrollment of at least 4 consecutive Terms, while 39.7% of the same group completed two (2) Terms or less. Among Vocational Prototypes, 22.9% remained four (4) or more Terms, and 61.3% discontinued enrollment after two (2) Terms or less. Special Interest Prototypes showed a pattern of 27% long term enrollments (4 or more Terms), and 56.5% short-term enrollment (2 Terms or less). The data of Table 5 present a strong case that the Community Colleges provide a point of access and preparation for Transfer to upper division education for a substantial proportion of students who remain enrolled until the objective of preparation has been met. It is also evident from Table 5 that Vocational Prototype students tend to be shorter-term in their enrollment patterns, with slightly more than one (1) out over every five (5) remaining in extended enrollment. The Special Interest Prototypes, in a similar pattern to the Vocational Prototypes,

tend to use the Community Colleges principally for short-term objectives, with over half of these students discontinuing enrollment after a period of two (2) Terms or less.

Tables 6 and 7 indicate the "mix" of students in the various curriculum patterns revealed by the Student Accountability Model (SAM) for identification of courses and programs. The data indicate that the preference of a majority of all CCC students is for Broad or Specific Occupational education (53.3%). For some, the choice may be for a program of two (2) years or less leading to certification and/or an Associate Degree. For others, Occupational preparation may be a longer term goal, including upper division and perhaps graduate level preparation. For still others, the objective may be to qualify for or maintain licensure, to explore another field, or to prepare for technical education not available in the public sector.

As observed earlier, there appear to be no major conflicts of function among the various Missions and Functions of the Community College, as revealed in patterns of student enrollment and preference. Overall, nearly one (1) in four (4) students is following an interest in Business and Management, either vocationally or avocationally. Almost the same proportion of students is following a General Transfer sequence of some kind. The remaining students are broadly distributed among Personal Interest and other majors, typically of an occupational nature.

Student Outcomes and Achievements: Findings

- As of the Spring, 1980,follow-up period, 123 students reported having transferred to a baccalaureate-granting institution. Of these, the distribution was as follows: UC, 17.1%; CSUC, 42.3%; Private, California, 8.1%; Out of State, 8.1%; Professional School, 1.6%; Other, 22.8%. (SLS IV, p. 2-11)

- For Transferred students (above), preparation in the Community College was rated on an "A" to "F" basis: "A", 35.7%; "B", 38.8%; "C",20.4%; "D", 4.1%; "F", 1.0%. More than 70% rated the preparation as either an "A" or a "B". (SLS IV, p. 2-11)

- For Transferring students (not yet trensferred): 8.8% reported that they felt they were making "No Progress" toward the Transfer goal; 55.6% reported feeling "Adequate Progress"; 35.5% reported making "Excellent Progress." (SLS IV, p. 2-14)

- Transferring students reported that they felt they would need a varying number of semesters to complete their preparation for the Transfer Goal: 4 Total, 31.8%; 5 Total, 26.9%, 6 Total, 19.5%; 7 Total, 7.8%; 8 Total, 1.8%; Unsure/Undecided, 12.2%. (SLS IV, p. 2-13)

- Among Vocational Students, the Most Important Reason for Attending the Community College was reported to be: First Career Job, 54.0%; Upgrade Job Skills, 29.8%; Maintain License, 3.2%; Evening or Weekend Job, 0.7%; Second Career Job, 12.3%. (SLS IV, p. 2 - 14)

- Vocational Students reported the following mix of Actual Courses taken: Not at All Related to Work, 34.9%; Somewhat Related to Work, 26.5%; A Great Deal Related to Work, 38.6%. (SLS IV, p. 2-15)

- When asked whether the courses were helpful in "Getting a Job", the Vocational Students responded: "Not at All", 61.3%;"Somewhat", 17.9%; "A Great Deal", 20.8%. The percentages in the last two (2) categories roughly correspond to the percentages (combined) for the last two (2) categories of the previous question. Similar findings were reported for "On the Job" relevance, "Pay Increase" relevance, and " promotion" relevance of vocational courses. (SLS IV, pp. 2-16 seq)

- Special Interest Students were asked to list the courses most of interest to them. In rank order, these were: General Education, 33.2%; Vocational Skills, 23.1%; Arts, Crafts, Musical Skills, 11.7%; Personal Development, 10.7%; Sport Skills, 8.7%; General Culture, 6.6%; Other Response, 5.9%. (SLS IV, p.2 - 21)

- When asked whether their goals had been met while attending college, Special Interest Students'responses indicated: Yes, Completely, 38.6%; Yes, partially, 42.9%; Not at All, 18.5%. (SLS IV, p. 2 - 23)

Observations/ Inferences

The Statewide Longitudinal Study addresses questions of educational outcome as well as educational activity. In essence, the Study suggests three (3) distinct kinds of outcomes: 1) Actual Transfer to a BA granting institution for students preparing for Transfer; 2) Vocational Placement, Advancement, or Enhancement for Students in the Vocational Prototypes, and; 3) Achievement of Stated Goals among Special Interest Prototype Students. The Study does not address the question of educational benefits to student who terminate enrollment prior to achievement of a stated goal. Historically, this latter question has always been the most difficult to address for a number of practical reasons, as well as philosophical reasons. Such reasons include:

- Student Mobility - from an institutional data base, it is impossible to determine except through extensive follow-up of the total sample whether student has moved to another community and are continuing to pursue earlier goals in another postsecondary institution.
- Student Intention - the institutional data base provides no basis for direct assessment of changing student intention. Declared Transfer Students may find it financially impossible to continue, but may return many years later to the same or a different postsecondary institution.
- The Dilemma of Access - the philosophical commitment of the CCCs to provide open access to the postsecondary sector of education does not also assure achievement of individual goals. Although not popularly reaffirmed since Clark's early identification of the function, "Cooling Out" unrealistic aspirations remains a functional reality of the Community College.

- Changing Historical Context - viewed in terms of costs and benefits, completion of a college degree or certificate is becoming more and more difficult to justify, as the Brookings Institution study (1981) tends to confirm. Students concerned with the extrinsic benefits of higher education may be tending to elect not to delay entry into the job market if they are not able to grasp a direct connection between learning and work.

For these, as well as other reasons, the SLS focus was upon the limited questions of goal attainment and/or progress toward a stated goal among the three (3) major Prototypes.

The findings reported in SLS IV (Spring, 1980) and SLS V (in press) offer a strong foundation from which to challenge the conclusion of the 1976 CPEC report that "continuing education for part-time, adult students has become the dominant function of the Community Colleges." (Knoell, 1976) In the SLS data, there are also indications that the tension ascribed between the "adult, continuing education" function and the traditional Mission of the Community Colleges in occupational and transfer education is neither as extensive not as severe as suggested in the 1981 CPEC position paper. (Knoell, 1981) Considered in the aggregate, the SLS data indicate that, as of the beginning of the decade of the 80s, the predominant Mission and Function of the CCCs is to provide both Broad and Specific Occupational Education to traditional and non-traditional students, full and part-time, day and evening. Taken together, these two categories (Broad and Specific Occupational Major), as defined under the SAM coding assignment methods, account for 53.3% of the SLS Sample (see Table 6 above). The Vocational Function accounts for 48.2% of the Transfer Prototype Student majors, and for 31.5% of the Special Interest Prototype Student majors (see Table 6 above).

For Vocational Prototype Students in particular, the emphasis of enrollment was reported to be qualification for the "First Career Job" (54.0%). Upon follow-up in Spring, 1980, students reported that the courses taken were "Not at All" helpful in "Getting a Job" (61.3%, and also reported similar opinions concerning advancement in salary or promotion. In context, however, the SLS Sample included 50% or more students (slightly higher for Vocational than for Non-Vocational) who reported initially (1978) to be working 36 or more hours per week. For Vocational Students, the Mean Hours Worked upon initial enrollment was 35.6; for both Vocational and Non-Vocational Students, the Mode Hours Worked was 40. The data suggest that one reason for the low rating of courses as helpful in obtaining a job is that the majority of Vocational students were already employed at the time of initial enrollment. Further, unless the courses were directly leading to initial employment in a First Career field, the Vocational Prototypes would probably consider "courses taken" to be only a modest influence upon employment or advancement when factors such as experience and personal performance during a screening and selectionprocess were taken into account. With utilitarian frankness, it seems, the SLS Vocational Students seemed to regard the "courses taken" as a small but necessary means to an occupational end. Much further analysis of the Vocational Prototype findings, and their implications for advisement and curriculum development in Vocational fields should be done. Such an analysis is far beyond the scope of this paper.

Among Transfer Prototypes, the evidence of SLS IV suggests that, although the number of students actually transferred as of Spring, 1980, was small, over 70% perceived that they had been adequately prepared for the transition ("A" or "B" grade). Only 5.1% reported feeling completely inadequately prepared ("D" or "F" grade). For those remaining in the Community

Community College, over 90% reported that they were making "Adequate" to "Excellent" progress toward the Transfer goal. Transfer Students tended to be realistic in estimating their progress toward the Transfer objective: one third (31.8%) expected to transfer after completing four (4) terms; about one-fourth (26.9%) felt it would take at least five (5) semesters; about one-fifth (19.5%) estimated it would take six (6) semesters. Again, the figures must be viewed in context of the historical realities that a greater proportion of students are combining work and study than in the past, and a greater proportion are pursuing education part-time over an extended number of years.

Special Interest Students tend to adopt personal interest objectives that are not in conflict with the Transfer and Occupational Missions and Functions of the Community College. Over 75% of these students remain in active enrollment for either two (2) terms, or for one term plus intermittent subsequent enrollment (see Table 5 above). Nearly 40% report that their personal objectives have been met "Completely" during their enrollment. Slightly over 40% indicate that the goals have been met "Partially," perhaps indicating the intention to return for additional courses. The majority of these students are found in General Education and/or Vocational fields, although the Art and Culture subcategory tends to remain a distinguishable enrollment type (11.7% interest in such courses). It is quite possibly this subcategory of Special Interest Prototypes that is the focus of such disproportionate attention as consumers of adult continuing education. The data seem to suggest that the claim upon public resources of such students is minimal indeed. At the same time, such students are perceived with some accuracy by Community College leaders as being an important support base from the local community, whose continued participation in the courses and services offered by the local college at once affirms and justifies the

investment of local tax revenues in the Community Colleges. As many of the Special Interest Prototypes would be vocal in pointing out, their access to the adult, continuing education services provided by the local Community College is their only return on their tax investment, and are often quite firm in their resolve not to give up that access.

The Statewide Longitudinal Study has provided an excellent data base from which to evaluate outcomes of the investment represented by initial enrollments of students in distinctive Ptototype groups. Such outcomes are reflected both in terms of actual achievement (employment, enrollment in a BA granting institution), and in perceived "educational benefit" as reported by the students. Available data from the SLS do not yet adequately address the questions of educational output in terms of degrees and/ or certificates. Neither are some of the detailed questions of impact of the institutional experience among Vocational Prototypes answered adequately at this point. Further analysis and follow-up of the SLS Sample may be required to provide answers to such questions.

What does seem to be clear from the data is that the Occupational and Transfer functions traditionally defined for the Community Colleges still seem to be in robust evidence, and that the operationally defined Mission of the Community Colleges is probably far closer to Occupational Education among all Prototypes than to the more generally evident adult, continuing education Mission inferred on the basis of aggregate data from earlier studies.

Policy Recommendation 4:

It is recommended that measures of activity and outcome be developed and reported in light of the differentiated objectives of students representing the major Prototypes within the California Community Colleges in future large-scale descriptive research.

Policy Recommendation 5:

It is recommended that comparisons among the segments be made, if necessary and appropriate, only on the basis of similarity of student Prototype, insofar as those Prototypes suggest a differentiation of clienteles among the segments of postsecondary education.

The first five (5) Policy Recommendations are intended to provide a foundation for further utilization of the Prototype models from the SLS throughout the California Community Colleges. The recommendations should not be misconstrued as mandating record keeping or reporting in terms of Prototypes, but rather as facilitating the utilization of the technique through existing data collection and management procedures and methods associated with local record keeping. The value of the Prototypes for future large scale research projects is suggested in Recommendations 3 and 4. Finally, since the use of Prototypes in the SLS shed so much additional light on the activities and outcomes among clearly distinguishable sub-populations, it is suggested that similar research be conducted in the other segments of California Higher Education, and that a basis be developed for comparing student activities (processes) and outcomes for similar groups accross the segments.

An assumption behind Recommendation 5 is that Prototyping is an informative foundation for examining distinctive institutional Mission and Function. As earlier large scale research activities have tended to illustrate, the examination of student data in the aggregate is far less informative than the examination of data for students in distinctive sub-categories. What has been shown valuable in one segment may be replicable in another. In

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS: IMPLICATIONS FROM THE SLS

The Statewide Longitudinal Study addressed six (6) long range goals of which two (2) were listed earlier in this paper (p. 17) as being especially relevant to considerations of issues related to Accreditation, Evaluation, and Educational Assessment. As the body of the paper has attempted to document, the SLS has made some extremely valuable contributions to the clarification of issues of Mission and Function which underlie all Accreditation and Evaluation considerations. Perhaps the major contribution of the SLS was the development and validation of Student Prototypes which could be distinguished, uniquely identified, and separately traced within California Community College student populations. Such Prototypes represent a major advance in descriptive analysis of student enrollment and preference patterns over time. Because of the importance of the contribution of Prototyping to the descriptive capability of the CCCs, a number of Policy recommendations seem appropriate.

Policy Recommendation 1:

It is recommended that the methodology for identifying distinct student Prototypes be refined and disseminated among the California Community Colleges in a manner and format compatible with existing Student Data reporting policies and procedures.

Policy Recommendation 2:

It is recommended that SLS reports outlining the development and use of the Prototypes be widely disseminated to representatives of all segments of the California postsecondary community.

Policy Recommendation 3:

It is recommended that other segments of the California postsecondary education community be urged to conduct descriptive research leading to identification of student Prorotypes within institutions other than the CCCs.

a very real sense, institutional Mission and Function are a reflection of the student population. A central question of the 1970s was whether the changing constituency from full to part-time, from younger meadian age to older median age, from "traditional" to "non-traditional" had in some way compromised earlier expressions of public policy as stated in California's Educational Master Plan. Through the Spring, 1980 follow-up (SLS IV), the evidence of the Statewide Longitudinal Study seems to suggest that the assigned Mission and Functions of the California Community Colleges may have been better intact than had been suggested by the previous analyses of data. The reported findings of the SLS, however, tend to emphasize educational activity (process) rather than outcome. As of SLS IV, only preliminary analyses had been made of the completion of formal objectives (degrees, certificates), the transition from college to occupational placement, and the performance and persistence of students upon transfer. For these reasons, several additional Policy Recommendations are suggested.

Policy Recommendation 6:

In keeping with the stated concern of CCOPES and other Vocational Education agencies, both voluntary and regulatory, it is recommended that continued follow-up of the existing SLS sample be made to determine additional outcome measures among the Vocational Prototype Students.

Policy Recommendation 7:

In keeping with the stated concerns of the Committee on Educational Policy of the Board of Regents, University of California and the CPEC on matters related to student flow among the segments, it is recommended that continued follow-up be made of the existing SLS sample to determine additional outcome measures among the Transfer Prototype students.

Policy Recommendation 8:

> In light of the demonstrated cost-effectiveness of the sampling procedures utilized in the SLS to follow up students in California Community Colleges with accuracy at a level acceptable in sampling research, it is recommended that longitudinal, small sampling techniques be utilized to provide data to state and federal agencies, and in response to legislative inquiries appropriate to the segment.

In the presentation of the historical context within which the SLS was conducted, it was noted that conflicting perceptions of the appropriate locus of educational evaluation and assessment characterized much of the 1970s. As Breneman and Nelson (1981) have rightly noted,

> The tension between the mission and finance of community colleges reflects many of the fundamental problems in today's economy: the fact of scarcity, the need for trade-offs, the limits of government, the costs of inefficiencies, and the conflicts between haves and have-nots when the economic pie is not growing. (1981, p. 39)

In an era of fiscal crisis for higher education, it can easily be understood that contending voices would compete for responsibility to assure quality of education as a matter of public trust. A prevailing perception in some regulatory and legislative circles has been that the model of voluntary professional assessment represented through regional accreditation is simply not rigorous enough to assure public accountability. At the same time, others feared a dramatic shift from qualitative measures to quantitative measures as a basis for institutional assessment. Through the active contention of the several voices of opinion in the late 1970s, two matters of consensus were reached:

1) Consistent, reliable data are required as the basis of all educational quality assessments, whether voluntary or regulatory; compliance or contribution.

2) Assurance of minimal performance (compliance) in a regulatory environment is a proper concern for agencies representing the public fiscal interest, while broader questions of institutional quality, development, and consistency with stated institutional mission and function are a proper concern for voluntary professional associations.

On balance, the Statewide Longitudinal Study strengthens the case that consistent, reliable data can be developed as a part of a planned and formal, contiuing research activity voluntarily conducted by a cooperating consort.um of postsecondary institutions. Historically, both the Northern California Research Group and the Southern California Research Association, along with the CCJCA Commission on Research and Development, have repeatedly demonstrated the efficacy of cooperative research efforts to respond to significant institutional questions on the basis of reliable and consistent data.

The SLS data do not provide a basis for choosing between regulatory demands of compliance and voluntary processes for improving institutional quality. In the 1980s, there is no longer available a luxury of advocacy of one over the other. There is, however, a need for differentiation of roles and responsibilities among the two kinds of public interest groups. For this reason, the final recommendations are:

Recommendation 9

That a portion of the final assessment of the joint FIPSE project underway between ACCJC and BGCCC be addressed to the role and function of institutional research and the large scale, longitudinal type of project in educational evaluation and accreditation.

Recommendation 10:

That continued attention be given to the development and maintenance of institutional research functions and capabilities on each campus and in each district of the California Community Colleges through staff development, training, and informal exchanges of research data and activities.

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